DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 165 973 95 RC 011 158

AUTHOR	Whitney, Helen, Comp.
TITLE	101 Environmental Education Activities. Booklet 2--Language Art Activities.
INSTITUTION	Upper Mississippi River ECO-Center, Thomson, Ill.
SPONS AGENCY	Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education (DHEW/OE), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	75
NOTE	38p.; Best copy available
AVAILABLE FROM	Upper Mississippi River ECO-Center, Thomson, Illinois 61285 ($1.00)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Activities; Curriculum Enrichment; *Curriculum Guides; Drama; Educational Objectives; Educational Resources; *Elementary Education; *Environmental Education; Evaluation Criteria; Experiential Learning; Field Trips; Instructional Materials; Intermediate Grades; *Language Arts; Language Instruction; Language Skills; *Outdoor Education; Poetry; Sensory Experience; Vocabulary; Writing
IDENTIFIERS	Elementary Secondary Education Act Title III; *Upper Mississippi River ECO Center

ABSTRACT

This booklet containing 20 language arts activities is the second in the series "101 Environmental Education Activities" produced by the Upper Mississippi River ECO-Center. The description of each activity contains learning objectives, directions, and suggested student evaluation standards. Elementary and intermediate level students expand their vocabularies, learn new descriptive terms, practice spelling, and study poetry as they improve their powers of observation and their sensory awareness. The activities, based on environmental observation and the outdoor education process, include studying modifying and descriptive words, verbs, nouns, opposites, and figures of speech; drama and poetry writing, including haiku; writing and following directions; exploring outdoor sensations; studying plants and animals; and taking accurate field notes. The final project is a school site study. (SB)

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101 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

BOOKLET 2

LANGUAGE ART ACTIVITIES

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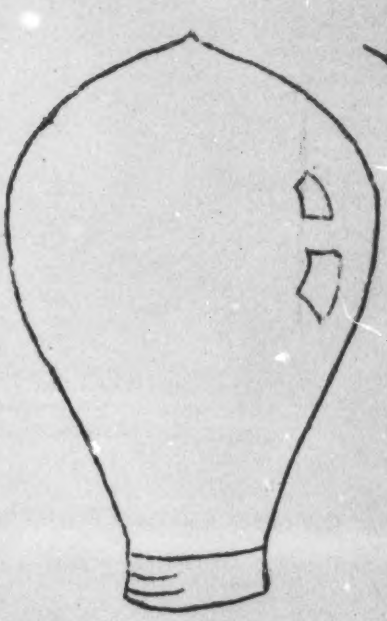

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The Upper Mississippi River ECO-Center
Title III, ESEA
Thomson, Illinois

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101 Environmental Education Activities

Booklets:

1. Art and Music Activities
2. Language Art Activities
3. Mathematics Activities
4. Science Activities
5. Science and Social Studies (Interdisciplinary) Activities
6. Social Studies Activities

LANGUAGE ARTS

Contents

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1	Use of Verbs in the Outdoors
2	Categories
3	Opposites
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18	Writing Poetry
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ACTIVITY: Use of verbs in the outdoors

DISCIPLINE AREA: Language Arts

OBJECTIVES:

1. Children will learn verbs by associating them with names of things they have seen in the outdoors.
2. Children will enrich vocabularies by learning little-used verbs.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

1. Children make list of things they have seen.
2. Children list verbs that tell what each of these things does.
3. Children complete chart.

EVALUATION:

70% of children should complete the chart, and all should be able to list ten verbs relating to ten things they have seen.

Verb	Noun	Verb	Noun
waddle		mutter	
creep		loathe	
stalk		whisper	
migrate		huddle	
shuffle		hum	
gallop		trill	
flow		twist	
drowse		sting	
buzz		squeak	
recede		rumble	
quiver		provide	
observe		meander	

ACTIVITY: Catagories

DISCIPLINE AREA: Language Arts

OBJECTIVES:

1. Children will learn new descriptive words to describe natural sensations.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

1. Children are given a chart with various senses as headings.
2. Children are given lists of words to put into catagories.
3. If children have ability they should prepare catagory lists.

EVALUATION:

At least 70% of the pupils should get 75% of the catagories correct.

CATEGORIES

These may be added to or simplified.

red	sour	cloudy	rainy
sharp	rattly	hairy	quiet
bitter	dry	snapping	plain
cold	sweet	slippery	dark
raspy	clear	dirty	soft
musty	rustly	brittle	square
smooth	still	colorful	chirping
waving	wooly	ugly	chilly
wet	minty	heavy	flowery
roaring	crisp	gritty	light
bent	sticky	ringing	acrid
rough	tall	rotten	smoky

Taste	Smell	Feel	Hear	See

3

ACTIVITY: Opposites

DISCIPLINE AREA: Language Arts

OBJECTIVES:

1. Children gain proficiency with adjectives.
2. Children learn to relate adjectives to actual objects.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

1. Children are given a list of opposite adjectives and asked to name something they have seen on a field experience which can be described by opposite words.

EVALUATION:

70% of pupils should complete the project. Care should be taken to be sure they are describing something they have seen.

LIST OF OPPOSITES

soft-hard
warm-cold
smooth-rough
springy-firm
ugly-beautiful
high-low
threatening-calm
cloudy-clear
turbid-clear
useful-useless
green-yellow
fuzzy-smooth
winged-sticky
strong-weak
wild-tame
old-young
sandy-grassy
fast-slow
windy-calm
wet-dry

ACTIVITY: Descriptions using adjectives

DISCIPLINE AREA: Language Arts

OBJECTIVES: Using outdoor experiences:

1. Children learn to associate descriptive words with nouns.
2. Children enrich their vocabularies.
3. Children learn to spell new words.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

1. Children are given a list of nouns and asked to write adjectives describing them.
2. Children are given a list of adjectives and asked to write a noun that each describes.
3. One group makes up a list of nouns; another makes a list of adjectives. Groups exchange lists and write descriptive words.
4. Children may learn to spell words by writing in mud, snow, or dust or spelling out with rocks or sticks.

EVALUATION:

70% of pupils should complete the exercise and be able to spell the words.

ACTIVITY: Poetry Selections

DISCIPLINE AREA: Language Arts

OBJECTIVES:

1. Children will learn how nature influences poets.
2. Children will sense mood in poetry.
3. Children will learn to select poetry to illustrate a mood.
4. Children will learn to choose poetry to compare authors' reactions to nature.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

1. During group discussion class decides what to look for in poetry.
2. Children look for examples of poetry.
3. Children compare different poets' reaction to the same thing.
4. Class may bring pictures to illustrate poems and arrange a bulletin board.

EVALUATION:

Teacher evaluation depends on how well class complete pre-planned project.

Bibliography:

The Arbuthnot Anthology of Children's Literature

Anthology of Children's Literature, Johnson, Scott, Sickels

From: Forest Valley Outdoor Education Center, North York Board of Education, Ontario

ACTIVITY: Meanings of Old Sayings

DISCIPLINE AREA: Language arts

OBJECTIVES:

1. Children will notice the references to nature in folk adages.
2. Children will learn meanings of folk adages.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

1. Children may write or give orally meanings of adages.
2. Children may use reference books to find adage meanings.

EVALUATION: None planned.

* * * * * *

Bibliography:

Breuer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable
A Hogon Ace and Other Curious Expressions, Funk
Heavens to Betsy! and Other Curious Sayings, Funk

ADAGES

1. to be caught between two fires
2. to fire away
3. to bark up the wrong tree
4. to blow your own horn
5. a snake in the grass
6. to sound fishy
7. to be scared out of one's wits
8. to jump out of one's skin
9. it's raining cats and dogs
10. with flying colors
11. beauty is only skin deep
12. to be out of the woods
13. one cant's see the forest for the trees
14. to add fuel to the fire
15. to skate on thin ice
16. to take the plunge
17. to rock the boat
18. when pigs fly
19. to bury the hatchet
20. to make the fur fly

ACTIVITY: Plant and animal identification

DISCIPLINE AREA: Language Arts

PURPOSE: To broaden the pupil's ability to observe and name animal and plant life which is part of his environment.

OBJECTIVES: The student will show an increase in his awareness of the plant and animal life of his environment by identifying at least 50% of the plants and animals or animal signs found on the school site.

LEARNING ACTIVITY:

School Site Study

Each pupil has a chart to be filled in. Some school sites will be richer than others, but all should be able to fill part of the chart. Animal signs may be used. This is a good exercise in the use of reference works.

Mammals	Birds	Insects & Other Animals	Plants

ACTIVITY: Dramatization

DISCIPLINE AREA: Language Arts

OBJECTIVES:

1. Children learn that words can be dramatized.
2. Children learn group cooperation in charades.
3. Children proceed in dramatization from words to plays.
4. Children learn difference between radio and television plays.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES: (Depending on Maturity)

1. Children act out verbs; e. g. wriggle, crawl.
2. Children act out charades.
3. Children cooperate in writing a play about some outdoor experience.
4. Children present play.
5. Children differentiate between type of material suitable for radio or television, and write one play for each.

EVALUATION:

Teachers judgement of each pupils contribution to dramatization.

ACTIVITY: Note-taking and reference work

DISCIPLINE AREA: Language Arts

OBJECTIVES:

1. Children learn to take accurate field notes for use in reference work.

2. Children learn to use a variety of reference works to identify subjects of field notes.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

1. Children take accurate field notes. For example a plant:

   a. Size
   b. Location, type of soil
   c. Leaves: size, shape, opposite or alternate, veining, edge, stalked or not, smooth or hairy, color of upper and lower sides, etc.
   d. Flowers: number of petals, type of petals, color, single flowers or cluster, single flower or stalk, time of year of flowering.
   e. Fruit and/or seeds: type, color, time of seeding

2. If they have the ability, a sketch will help

3. The same attention to details is important in any note-taking.

4. Children may use a variety of reference works depending on age and ability. New types of reference works may be introduced in this way.

5. Children identify subjects of notes from reference study.

EVALUATION:

70% of pupils should be able to make an accurate identification from notes.

ACTIVITY: Writing and following directions

DISCIPLINE AREA: Language Arts

1. Children will learn to write accurate directions.
2. Children will learn to read and follow directions.
3. Depending on age and time children may learn to use a compass to write directions.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

1. Children start from same place and spread out over a given area.
2. Children write directions for reaching a chosen place. If area is well known to all, an identification tag to show that the right destination has been reached may be better than a name.
3. Rather than streets and buildings, things like a squirrel's feeding station, brook riffles, or a hollow tree should be used.
4. Children trade directions and try to follow them.

EVALUATION:

70% of the children should be able to write accurate directions and follow them.

If compass trails are laid out, 70% should be able to lay them out and follow them.

ACTIVITY: Describing a Storm

DISCIPLINE AREA: Language Arts

OBJECTIVES:

1. Children learn to make accurate observations of a natural phenomina.
2. Children learn to write a clear description of a natural phenomina.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

1. Children watch approaching storms.
   a. Describe the clouds.
   b. Describe changes in clouds.
2. Describing the storm
   a. How rain or snow starts
   b. Action of rain or snow on ground, roofs, trees
   c. Wind: direction, velocity
   d. If rain storm; amount of thunder and lightning
   e. Trees: effect of storm
   f. Duration of storm
   g. Damage, if any
3. After observation and note taking children write descriptions.
4. Draw or find pictures illustrating storms.

EVALUATION:

Teacher evaluates on goals set.

Activity: Descriptions

Discipline Area: Language Arts

Objectives:

1. Children will learn to write descriptions of things perceived by each of the senses.

Learning Activities:

1. During a field experience each child collects one object.
2. Each child writes a description of what he perceives with each sense; e.g. five short paragraphs.
3. Children are encouraged to use new words and phrases in their writing.

Evaluation:

Children are checked on imagination, spelling, and accuracy.

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Activity: Figures of speech

Discipline Area: Language Arts

Grade Level: Intermediate

Objectives:

1. Children will better understand use of figures of speech.
2. By using figures of speech in an actual learning experience, children will better understand their value in creative writing.

Materials needed: Clipboards, pencils, and paper.

Learning Activities:

1. Teacher reads examples of figures of speech.
2. Children write examples and read aloud.

Evaluation: Each child writes one example.

Alliteration: Alliteration is the repetition of the same beginning letter or sound. Think of something you have seen today and then think of a word with the same beginning letter to describe it. Find as many of these words as you can. For example: 1.bee 2. bumblebee 3.black, bumblebee 4. big,black,bumblebee

Finally you may have something like this: bungling, buzzing, big, flack bumblebee.

Simile: Similes are comparisons using like or as. An example would be: The wind whining like a puppy.

These exercises are good to use to describe something using other senses than sight.

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From: Environmental Education Center, Oteen, North Carolina)

Activity: Holiday Senses in Sentences (general)

Discipline: Language Arts

Grade Level: Primary

Objective:

1. Children will learn to use other senses than sight as an inspiration for poetry.

Learning Activities:

List on the chalkboard the uses of our five senses:

1. We hear with our ears.
2. We feel with our fingers.
3. We smell with our nose.
4. We see with our eyes.
5. We taste with our tongue.

Explain that each holiday time brings its own special enjoyment to one or more of our five senses.

Have students write sentences describing:

1. Sounds we hear at Christmas.
2. The colorful objects we see at Easter.
3. The feel of Christmas trees and ice and snow.
4. The smell of Thanksgiving Dinner.
5. The tastes present in a candy store or at the carnival.

15

From: Environmental Education Center, Oteen, North Carolina)

Activity: Poetry Fragrance

Discipline Area: Language Arts

Grade Level: Intermediate

Objective:

1. Children will learn to use other senses than sight as an inspiration for poetry.

Learning Activity:

Have students take a quick whiff from a small container of an unknown material with a pungent odor.

1. Hair spray
2. Cloves (spices)
3. Paint
4. Bleach
5. Perfume

(cont'd)

Discuss them until they are identified. Write on the chalkboard a four line poem relating to the smell. Have the class suggest the first three lines unrhymed.

Students can work out a fourth line to rhyme with the second line. Each student works out a four line poem about one of the smells presented or another he remembers.

Clove flavor's good in chewing gum
That's not allowed at school!
We like the taste a lot, you bet,
But gum's against the rule.

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From: Environmental Education Center, Oteen, North Carolina)

Activity: Sounds of Life

Discipline Area: Language Arts

Grade Level: Intermediate

Objective:

1. Children will learn to use other senses than sight as an inspiration for poetry.

Learning Activities:

The teacher can draw the class into a discussion of sounds they hear in relation to everyday living at home or abroad.

1. Morning sounds
2. School sounds
3. Daytime sounds
4. Evening-at-home sounds
5. Night sounds

Then have the students write paragraphs describing sounds they hear every day, relating them to both routine and unexpected happenings.

Activity: Study of modifying words

Discipline Area: Language Arts

Grade Level: Intermediate

Objectives:

1. Children will learn to better recognize modifying words by app applying them to something they have recently experienced.

Materials needed: pencils, clipboards, and work sheets.

Learning Activity:

1. Children are given clipboards, pencils, and work sheets with lists on them.
2. Children fill in word sheets.
3. Children read lists aloud and discuss why descriptive words are good or poor.

Evaluation: Seventy-five percent of the pupils should complete the sheet. Several should show superior imagination.

(see attached worksheet)

WORK SHEET

for Study of Modifying Words

Noun	Adjectives
clouds	
grass	
water	
tree	
bird	
sand	
feather	
bur	
tree	
road	

Adjectives	Nouns
fuzzy	
slimy	
soft	
cool	
buzzing	
rustling	
rushing	
quiet	
noisy	
slippery	

Activity: Writing poetry

Discipline Area: Language Arts

Grade Level: Intermediate

Objectives:

1. Children will learn various forms of poetry.
2. Children will learn to look to nature for inspiration for writing poetry.

Materials needed: Pencils, paper, clip boards

Activities:

1. Teacher will give children an example of a poetry type.
2. Children will write a poem and then read it.

Evaluation: Each child writes one poem for each lesson.
This lesson can be carried out through several class periods with children working on couplets, triplets, limericks, haiku, cinquain, or diamonds.

Children's poems may be published in school paper as an incentive.

Examples:

COUPLET (KUP-lit)

A couplet is two lines of verse. The last word in both lines rhyme. Here are two couplets:

I just came down the hill. The tree growing so tall.

I was careful not to take a spill. Makes me feel quite small.

Now it's your turn to write a couplet. Write at least one.

_____

_____

Examples:

TRIPLET

A triplet is much like a couplet, except that a triplet has three lines. The last words in each of the three lines rhyme. An example of a triplet is:

The little worm, round.
Made not a sound.
As he dug into the ground.

There's lots to be seen. Look around and use a triplet to tell about something you see.

_____

_____

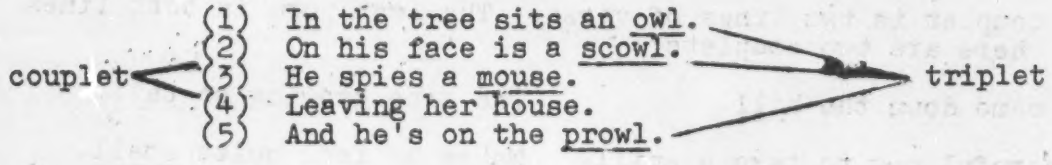
_____

Example:

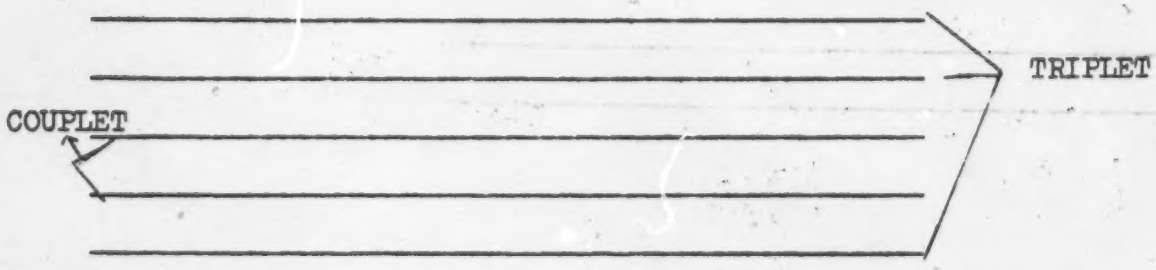
LIMERICK

Now you are ready to use what you have learned about couplets and triplets to write a longer form of verse. This form is called a limerick.

READ CAREFULLY: A limerick uses a triplet and a couplet. Look at the example below. The triplet is on lines 1, 2, and 5. The couplet is on lines 3 and 4.



Look around. Take your time. Write your limerick below.



Examples:

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(cont'd)

HAIKU

You should enjoy this form of verse. It is used by the Japanese to describe things in nature. The form is called haiku.

Haiku is three lines long. It does not rhyme. Haiku is based on the number of syllables.

Here is all you need to remember:

The first line has five (5) syllables.
The second line has seven (7) syllables.
The third line has five (5) syllables.

The examples below were written by student-authors like yourself.

(5) Snowflake, you come down
(7) And fall on the earth below
(5) Like a white paper

(5) Soft wings fluttering
(7) Bright colors flying through air
(5) Lovely butterfly.

Example:

CINQUAIN (sin-KANE)

Here is the last form of verse that you will learn on the "Path to Verse". This form has five lines and is called cinquain. It is a form used by Italians. It is based on the number of words in each line.

Follow these simple directions for each line:

First line: Use one word giving a title.
Second line: Use two words describing the title.
Third line: Use three words showing action.
Fourth line: Use four words showing a feeling about the title.
Fifth line: Use one word which is a synonym for the title.

Below is a cinquain which was written by another student-author. Write your cinquain below that one.

Bat
Black, winged
Flies, eats, sleeps
Gliding quickly through air
Mammal.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Activity: Exploring the sense of touch (Ten Minute Field Hike)

Discipline area: Language arts

Grade level: Primary

Objectives:

The children will better understand the part the sense of touch plays in living by using this sense on a field experience.

In preparation for this exercise the teacher will prepare a "Feel Board". At the top of the board the teacher will put words relating to the sense of feeling. Examples are: soft, hard, rough, smooth, heavy, light, fuzzy, warm, cool. The class will discuss the meanings of the words and give some examples.

On a hike the children will look for things that illustrate the words. After the class returns to its room, the children may put pictures that illustrate the words under them.

School Site Study # 20

Activity: Study of modern building materials, their uses, composition, how they are made, and relative cost

Discipline area: Language arts, science

Grade level: Intermediate, Junior high

Activities:

During a field experience the children should be able to find uses of brick, rock, cement, wood, asphalt, tile, and several metals. After the field work, they may do the follow-up in the classroom with the worksheets.

Field Check List

As you walk around the building and the schoolgrounds fill in the following blanks.

1. Our school is built of _____.
2. Sidewalks are made of _____.
3. Eavespouts are made of _____.
4. Streets are paved with _____.
5. Houses around the area are often made of _____, _____, or _____.
6. Restroom floors may be covered with _____ or _____.
7. Telephone and electric poles on the schoolgrounds are made of _____.
8. Playgrounds are often paved with _____.
9. Curbs are usually made of _____.
10. Telephone, power lines and fences are made of _____.
11. Did you find any uses of wood? Where?
12. Did you find any uses of glass? Where?

Follow-up Studies

Utilities and Services

A community cannot get along without many industries. Thus it is important that all units making up a community work together. One of the most important industries is the utility company which supplies electricity. The company that supplies fuel is also important. See if you can find the answers to the following questions.

Can you find: electric wires?_____transformers?_____ power poles? _____conduits?_____switch or power boxes? _____meters? _____insulation?_____ Can you find any outside evidence that relates to your school's fuel supply? What?_____. How is your school heated? _____. Is there a fuel meter outdoors? What is the name of the company that supplies your fuel?_____ _____. Is there a fuel meter outdoors? _____ Can you read it? _____. Can you find any source of your water supply? _____Who supplies water to your school?_____How does your school dispose of its waste? Liquid?_____Solid?_____

Indicate ways in which these services affect the environment.

Service or Waste	Detracts from beauty	Adds to Pollution	Affects noise level
Telephone system			
Electric system			
Fuel or heating system			
Water supply system			
Waste products			

Follow-up Work Sheets

Bricks

1. Of what material are bricks made?

2. What gives bricks their color?

3. Why are bricks fired (baked)?

4. How are bricks fired?

5. What name is given to unfired bricks? In what part of the country can they be used?

Building Stone

1. What kind of stone is most commonly used for buildings?

2. What must be done with stone before it can be used for buildings?

Tile

1. Of what is tile made?

2. What is the difference between brick and tile?

3. Name some uses for tile other than in bathrooms.

Wood

1. From what do we get lumber?

2. Name several kinds of wood commonly used for lumber. (A visit to a lumber yard will answer many questions about lumber and other building materials. Often the children can get samples for classroom study or display.)

Cement

1. Of what is cement made?

2. What is meant by Portland cement?

3. Why are cement blocks usually hollow?

Follow-Up Work Sheets
(Cont'd)

Asphalt

1. Of what is asphalt made?

Metal

1. How many uses of metal did you find? Name them.

2. What is steel?

3. Why is copper often used for power lines?

4. Why are some metals coated with zinc (galvanized)?

Comparative Uses

1. Which is cheaper for paving, asphalt or cement?

   Which is easier to work with?

   Which wears better?

2. Why is cement cheaper than building stone?

   Which is easier to build with, cement or cement blocks?

3. Why is tile more expensive than cement blocks?

   Why is tile more practical for walls and floors than cement blocks?

4. Why is wood practical for buildings? Give four reasons?

   What must be done with wood to preserve it?

   How are telephone and power poles protected from insects and weathering?

Here are some businesses you may find in your town. Some supply goods and some supply services. Some are privately owned and operated and some are publicly supported by taxes. Make checks in the proper columns for each of the businesses you see. Do not mark any you do not see even if you know that such a business is in your town.

Goods	Services	Public	Private		Goods	Services	Public	Private	
				Airport					Gift Shop
				Auto Parts Store					Greenhouse
				Bakery					Grocery Store
				Bank					Hardware Store
				Barber Shop					Hobby Shop
				Beauty Shop					Hospital
				Body Shop					Hotel
				Bowling Alley					Jaycees
				Boy Scouts					Jewelry Store
				Camera Shop					Laundromat
				Church					Library
				City Bus Service					Lions Club
				Clothing Store					Lumber Yard
				Court House					Masonic Lodge
				Dentist					Monument Works
				Dr.'s Office/Clinic					Moose Lodge
				Drug Store					Motel
				Dry Goods Store					Museum
				Elevator					Music Store
				Feed Store					Newspaper Office
				Fire Station					Police Station
				4-H Club					Post Office
				Furniture Store					Radio/T/V.Shop &Repair
				Garage					Radio Station

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Goods	Services	Public	Private		Goods	Services	Public	Private	
				Restaurant					Telephone Office
				Rotary Club					Theater
				School					Travel Agency
				Sewage Disposal Plant					T.V. Station
				Shoe Repair Shop					Upholstery
				Shoe Store					Utilities Office
				Sporting Goods Store					Variety Store
				Tavern					Veterinarian
				Taxi Service					V.F.W.

1. Did you see any factories? ___If you answer "Yes", Tell their names.

2, If you know what the factories make, tell that.

3. All urban areas have streets, alleys and sidewalks. Answer these questions about them.

   a. With what were the streets paved?

   b. With what were the alleys paved?

   c. Of what were the sidewalks made?

   d. Were there curbs and gutters?

   e. Were there any storm sewers?

   f. Did you see any parking lots?

   g. Did you see any parks or playgrounds?

CHECK LIST FOR HOUSING

Answer yes or no or put in a number where it is asked for in the answer.

House No. for Identification	Number of Stories	Garages		Porches	Chimneys	Trees in yard-1 or more	Building Material	How It Looks	
		Part of House	Not Part of House		Give No.		Name the kind.	Well Kept	Run Down

Tell some of the things you have found out about old houses.

Tell some of the things you have found out about new houses.

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